United Nations S/PV.6979

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

6979th meeting
Friday, 14 June 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Sir Mark Lyall Grant	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Briens
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. Kpayedo
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2013/254)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

13-36395 (E)

Accessible document

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2013/254)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Serbia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, and I request the Chief of Protocol to escort him to his seat at the Council table.

Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President: I also recognize the presence in the Chamber of His Excellency Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hashim Thaçi to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/254, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I now give the floor to Mr. Zarif.

Mr. Zarif: On 19 April, following difficult political negotiations personally facilitated by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union (EU), Ms. Catherine Ashton, a historic first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations was initialled between Belgrade and Pristina.

The agreement, consisting of 15 points, provides for the establishment of an association/community of Serb municipalities that would encompass a range of competences related to the people's day-to-day life. It also envisages holding local elections in 2013 in northern Kosovo municipalities with the facilitation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Each party also undertook not to block the other side's progress in their respective European Union integration paths. An implementation committee made up of representatives from both sides is to be established under the facilitation of the European Union. Importantly, both sides also affirmed the importance of continuing to engage in a political dialogue.

The Secretary-General welcomed the agreement and encouraged the parties to conclude this historic process and to take concrete measures aimed at faithfully implementing the agreement. I wish to congratulate the leaders of both sides, who are present today in this Chamber, for the wisdom, prudence and political foresight they have shown in jointly taking this fundamental step forward. That determination and persistence will also be needed to sustain this spirit of compromise and mutual respect as they carry their agreement forward. On 22 May, as a sign of their commitment, the parties agreed on an implementation plan for the provisions contained in the 19 April agreement. It provides timelines for implementation that will require both sides to move ahead expeditiously. It is clear that a high degree of commitment, flexibility and creativity will also be required to meet those ambitious timelines.

I believe that the international community's support and resourcefulness will also be needed to help ensure that positive momentum is sustained in the face of inevitable challenges. While the international community has regularly committed a strong level of political engagement and resources to promoting progress, that may be even more crucial in the coming period for all international presences in Kosovo. A generous investment internationaln resources and efforts will preserve the peace dividends in the region, and support for an integrated and coordinated implementation process will be crucial. Among others, a key factor in the successful implementation of the 19 April agreement will be support for it from the Serbs of northern Kosovo. I appreciate the Belgrade leadership's courageous and continuing efforts to reach out and raise understanding and support for the

agreement among the leaders and people of northern Kosovo. Those efforts have included proactive exchanges with and visits from senior Government officials in order to address the concerns of Kosovo Serbs about the impact of the agreement on their future.

I also wish to stress that such support cannot and should not be seen as Belgrade's sole responsibility. All share responsibility for achieving better communications with the population of the north and for taking action that addresses — rather than exacerbates — the concerns and legitimate interests of the people there. Public protests in northern Mitrovica, including a mass rally of several thousand Kosovo Serbs on 22 April and a subsequent demonstration organized by university students on 25 April, indicate the level of continuing apprehensions, as well as the paramount importance of better communication to all groups and stakeholders in the north.

Over the past week, joint working groups have been focusing on the implementation details and other issues, such as energy and telecommunications and the exchange of liaison officers. Those discussions have been taking place against the backdrop of the upcoming consideration by the EU Council of Serbia's and Kosovo's progress on their respective EU accession tracks.

We continue to witness the symptoms of tension and uncertainty in various parts of Kosovo with respect to the translation of political agreements into practice on the ground. As reflected in the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/254), the threat of instability remains present in sensitive areas, both north and south of the Ibar River. Too often, local leaders still appear to be reticent to speak out clearly and firmly and to ensure an effective response to acts of ethnic intolerance or intimidation directed at members of any of the communities in Kosovo.

Regardless of those ongoing concerns, there were also some encouraging efforts on the ground alongside developments at the political level. In that context, I should like to make particular mention of President Atifete Jahjaga, who has been addressing some of the inter-ethnic issues in Kosovo.

The Kosovo police has established ethnically mixed special units in four regions for the protection of Serbian religious and cultural heritage sites. The unit covering the Peć Patriarchate was constituted on 16 May and is now working together with the Kosovo Force and church leaders to gradually assume greater security duties there. In the same time frame, the implementation of the Law on the Historic Centre of Prizren moved forward with the establishment of a Council tasked with monitoring progress and compliance.

Publicly funded repairs and reconstruction of the Orthodox gravestones damaged or destroyed in a wave of attacks across Kosovo this past January is progressing. A majority of the affected gravestones have been repaired by now, and work is continuing. At the end of May, the Kosovo authorities, in cooperation with the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, organized a broad-based inter-faith conference, which included leaders of all faiths in Kosovo, including the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In compliance with resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, the Kosovo Assembly recently envisaged legislation recognizing the status and rights to benefits of survivors of sexual violence during the conflict. That important addition followed active advocacy efforts by civil society organizations, together with the United Nations and other international actors on the ground.

I wish to take this opportunity simply to highlight one additional crucial area in which progress could and, in my view, should accompany that being made through the ongoing political processes, namely, determining the fate of persons missing since the time of the conflict. Although the Joint Working Group on Missing Persons continues to meet regularly and reflects a spirit of increasing mutual respect and cooperation, much information vital to the resolution of missing persons cases from both sides is still lacking. More serious efforts to locate and provide such information are needed from each side, which in turn requires a more substantial commitment at the political level. Without such commitments, progress on an issue crucial for reconciliation will continue to be unacceptably slow.

The 19 April agreement represents a major achievement and a decisive step forward for both Belgrade and Pristina, which should contribute to the peaceful solution of issues that have long divided the parties. Energetic and cogent facilitation by the High Representative of the European Union has been fundamental to obtaining that result. No less fundamental have been the political will and leadership demonstrated by the parties, who, in their aspirations

to join Europe, have assumed historic responsibility for difficult but necessary compromises.

The agreement sets a course that will be neither sure nor swift. In that respect, my sincere hope is that the membership of the Security Council, indeed the international community as a whole, will continue to provide its resolute support to progress. The situation on the ground, including the domestic political situation on both sides, remains fragile, and it cannot be taken for granted that the progress being achieved now is irreversible or that it is simply assured.

The implementation of the agreements reached in the EU-facilitated process will require continued hard work by the parties and the active support of the international community. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is making efforts to ensure that its activities, including its own supporting role on the ground, contribute to the creation, in close coordination with international partners, of an enabling environment for the implementation of the Agreement.

I wish to express deep appreciation to the members of the Council for their continuing political engagement with the parties, as well as my hope that such an engagement will remain steadfast throughout the coming delicate and challenging period.

I conclude by thanking you, Mr. President, and all members of the Council for your support to UNMIK and for promoting the shared objectives of political progress, peace and reconciliation on the ground.

The President: I thank Mr. Zarif for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia.

Mr. Dačić (Serbia) (*spoke in Serbian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the efforts he has made and the commitment he has shown in addressing the problems on the ground.

Upon careful study of the report (S/2013/254) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for the period 16 January to 22 April this year, I very much regret having to say that the report highlights some important security challenges. The security situation in the north of Kosovo is still very fragile, and frequent incidents are of particular concern. According to the data available to us, 60 ethnically motivated attacks were registered in the first four months of 2013, 20 more than in the same period last year. I also must bring to the Council's attention the ethnically motivated low-grade crimes, such as threats, intimidation and theft. Even if such crimes often go unreported, they are no less effective as a means of applying pressure than are physical attacks. Moreover, their numbers are on the rise.

In the reporting period, Serbia repeatedly showed its willingness to make an active contribution to overcoming the problems that have accumulated. Our principal goal is to achieve a sustainable solution that will help everybody in Kosovo and Metohija, on the one hand, and preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia, on the other. Serbia will continue to care about the Serbian people of Kosovo and Metohija and to make efforts to ensure the safe return and sustainable livelihood of Serbian citizens living there. We are convinced that, even though that is a very difficult path, it is the best way to overcome the legacies of the past.

Since the formation of the new Government of the Republic of Serbia, eleven rounds of political dialogue have been held in Brussels through the mediation efforts of Baroness Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The next round of negotiations is scheduled for 20 June. During the dialogue my country invested considerable efforts and demonstrated great flexibility, which was recognized by many international officials, including Baroness Ashton herself. In furthering the process, Serbia will continue to be guided by the firm belief that the negotiations may lead to a solution acceptable to all that will be a solid basis for building lasting peace and achieving full security for all people living in Serbia's southern province.

The six-month political dialogue resulted in the "First agreement on principles governing normalization of relations". The Republic of Serbia is determined to implement the agreement. At the same time, allow me to point out that this is the first agreement reached between Belgrade and Pristina, as negotiations on a whole range of important topics — such as the status of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the protection of

cultural and religious sites, the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and property rights, as well as the modalities for the implementation of the agreement — are yet to be broached by the two sides.

The Republic of Serbia has great expectations of future meetings of the teams for the elaboration of agreement implementation plans. My country deems that it is very important that the agreed provisions for the implementation of the agreement should be put into practice, reflecting the will and intentions of the negotiators who initialled the Brussels agreement, and that by the same token the status of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija should be defined in very clear terms.

Let me also recall that the first agreement provides for the establishment of the "Association/Community" of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo and Metohija. The Community will be invested with many important responsibilities in the fields of economic development, education, health and urban and rural planning. The ethnic structure of the police and the judiciary will be respected in the territory of the Community, while the future Pristina armed forces will not be allowed to enter the North without the permission of the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

The survival of the Serbian population in the province, both north and south of the Ibar River, is linked directly to its physical security. Since June 1999 and the arrival of the international civil and military presence in Kosovo and Metohija, almost 7,000 physical attacks have been registered in which 1,262 persons, 1,037 of them Serbs and non-Albanians, have been killed and 1,818 injured. Out of the 427 towns and villages in which Serbs lived prior to 1999, 311 have been completely ethnically cleansed. Serbs do not live there any more, but we want to believe that, over time, conditions will be created for their return. In particular, it is necessary that they be encouraged to return, which can be achieved only by creating conditions for the physical and economic sustainability of returnee communities throughout Kosovo and Metohija. A sustainable IDP return would provide an opportunity to create a multi-ethnic Kosovo and Metohija.

It is with regret that I have to say that the process of IDP returns to Kosovo and Metohija has been very slow and difficult to sustain. The returnees are supported in word rather than in deed; they are eventually left to their own devices and face attacks by local communities. They ask the Republic of Serbia for support or to return to the place of displacement. Admittedly, it may be too much to expect that the returnees will be welcome in the communities to which they return, yet there is no doubt that the relevant Kosovo and Metohija institutions are obliged to provide at least basic living conditions, such as physical security.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 22,982 persons have returned to Kosovo and Metohija since 1999, only 42.6 per cent of them from the Serbian community. According to our data, there have been only about 4,000 so-called sustainable returnees in the past 14 years. Particularly worrisome is the fact that 47 returnees from minority communities were registered in the first quarter of 2013, nearly half as many as in the same period in 2012, when 87 returnees to Kosovo and Metohija were registered.

Of particular interest are the assessments contained in the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Kosovo and Metohija from October 2012, in which it is contended that the

> "absence of a sustainable solution for approximately 235,000 displaced persons (DPs) from Kosovo continues to pose a major challenge for all concerned".

UNHCR in Geneva intends to end the financing of programmes for IDPs in Serbia. Even though the amount of $2.8 million earmarked for IDPs is to be approved in September, regrettably no donor has yet to pledge any money for the UNHCR fund for IDPs from Kosovo and Metohija. I take this opportunity to call on all to continue to help the displaced persons, as many as 96,000 of whom live below the poverty line.

The process of return has been made more difficult by the fact that the system of the rule of law in Kosovo and Metohija suffers serious shortcomings and has been unable to provide proper protection against repeated human rights violations, in particular the violations of the rights of minorities. That is confirmed also in the report of the European Court of Auditors from October 2012, in which it is said that, even though Kosovo is the largest per capita recipient of financial aid in the world, this assistance has not been sufficiently effective to establish a proper system of the rule of law. The report states that the European Union has helped Kosovo to build certain capacities in the field of the rule of law,

but that the reach of the assistance to police and the judiciary has been limited.

The position of the European Court of Auditors is corroborated by the fact that the practice of arresting members of the Serbian community continues unabated and without explanation as to who is responsible and the legal basis on which the contentious warrants are being issued. This in no way helps to build confidence or a sense of security within the Serbian population.

The presence of the international community in the field is of decisive importance to the implementation of all agreements. We therefore consider that the United Nations should continue to coordinate the work of the international organizations acting in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija under its auspices and that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) should continue to carry out its mandate and ensure that missions in Kosovo and Metohija act exclusively within a status-neutral framework as provided for by resolution 1244 (1999).

We have learned from experience that the role of UNMIK in stabilizing the situation in the region is irreplaceable. Although we understand the reasons for the planned budget restrictions, we believe that its present mandate must remain unchanged, its activity enhanced, and its cooperation with the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) made more efficient.

Of all institutions in Kosovo and Metohija, the minority communities trust UNMIK the most, since its political team addresses sensitive issues of exceptional importance to the Serbian community, including the protection of cultural heritage, raising the level of legal and security protection, and the implementation of the right to free return and reconciliation. We therefore believe that, rather than be reduced, the UNMIK political team should be strengthened as we enter an even more sensitive period in which we shall be called upon to implement agreements on these important issues.

Of particular concern is the situation relating to the suspension of the financing of the UNMIK Administration in Mitrovica by the provisional institutions of self-government and the establishment of the so-called Mitrovica North Administration Office without consultations or agreement with the Serbian side or UNMIK, which is tantamount to an attempt to take over the existing competencies of the Administration in Mitrovica. I recall that the Administration in Mitrovica was established in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) and that its responsibilities and concrete powers are defined in UNMIK Administrative Direction No. 2007/12, by which the legitimacy of governance is extended to the Municipality of Mitrovica by establishing, on a temporary basis, UNMIK's direct administrative responsibility for the northern part of the municipality.

Nonetheless, the UNMIK Administration in Mitrovica continues to perform functions in mediation, reconciliation and conflict prevention, as pointed out in the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/254), in which it is also said that the Mitrovica North Administration Office cannot exercise effective jurisdiction in the north of the province. Therefore, we expect that the question of the Administration financing will be resolved soon.

Well aware of the magnitude and importance of the task ahead of us. We have invested enormous efforts and harnessed all our potentials with the aim of achieving an agreement in order to make the life of all in the province easier and to bring us closer to lasting reconciliation. I must therefore bring to the attention of the Security Council that, even though they comply with all procedures, the officials and renowned public figures of the Republic of Serbia continue to have access to and stay in Kosovo and Metohija, belying the fact that the so-called institutions of independent Kosovo continue not only to violate their right to freedom of movement but call into question their readiness to reach an agreement.

Even though we understand that, unlike in Belgrade, considerable political forces exist in Pristina that are opposed to any agreement whatsoever, we cannot understand the absence of response in cases of violation not only of laws, but of basic civilizational norms. We understand, for instance, that the devastated Serbian cemetery in southern Mitrovica can never be restored to its previous state, but we do not understand why nothing is being done to bring the perpetrators of the vandalism to justice or to prevent future devastations or restore the cemetery. Surely, we would insist on such measures being taken in northern Mitrovica had the local Muslim cemetery ever been desecrated, which has not been the case. The attacks against the Serbian Orthodox Church, its facilities and clergy and the plundering of churches and monasteries continue unabated. Although all of the cases have been reported in a timely manner to the Kosovo police and KFOR, no report on the investigation results has been received in

any particular case and no perpetrator has ever been apprehended. Such attacks are tolerated even in the case of an attempt to protect the Serbian heritage, such as the Supreme Court of Kosovo's decision confirming the ownership of the Dečani Monastery by the Serbian Orthodox Church. The demonstrations at Dečani were organized after that decision by the Self-Determination Movement and officials of the Dečani municipality and ended only after KFOR intervention. That protest is just another example of the instigation to ethnic hatred and religious intolerance by Albanian extremists and another reason why KFOR should stay in Kosovo and Metohija. I thank the United States for its decision not to reduce its contingent.

I would like to highlight the question of the Serbian cultural heritage and religious sites in Kosovo and Metohija, which will be one of the topics of future negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina. In that context, the establishment of a specialized, multi-ethnic unit for the protection of cultural heritage and religious sites within the Kosovo police is a positive, but insufficient step in the right direction of providing additional guarantees for the security of the cultural heritage and religious sites in Kosovo and Metohija, especially because the Serbian population and Orthodox clergy do not trust the Kosovo police.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia also has no confidence in the privatization carried out by the Kosovo Privatization Agency, formally the Kosovo Trust Agency. We deem the process to contravene international and European conventions on human rights, since it disregards the rights of the legal owners. Let us recall that the Republic of Serbia invested billions of dollars in public companies in Kosovo and Metohija over many decades, and, as a guarantor, continues to pay international creditors the instalment payments for loans taken out to help companies in Kosovo and Metohija. The rights of workers in non-majority communities, especially the IDPs, who are to receive part of the proceeds from the sale of such companies, are threatened by the privatization.

The privatization of public and State-owned companies in Serbian communities is also of particular concern. The sale of those companies to persons of Albanian nationality, with capital of suspect origin, have resulted in the loss of economic resources in these communities and is instrumental in stepping up the exodus of the Serbian population from Kosovo and Metohija for economic reasons and owing to the lack of security.

In the previous political process, my country, notwithstanding the unilateral nature of the declaration of independence of Kosovo, granted a limited international status and legitimacy to the provisional institutions of self-government in Pristina. It considers, however, that negotiations at a high political level should be conducted without addressing the question of the international and State legal status of the provisional institutions in Pristina. The goal is to establish administrative organs in the province that will be respected by all of the parties included in the process, with formal, legal and political guarantees at the level of the province and the international community for the political, territorial and other rights of national communities throughout the territory of Kosovo and Metohija.

The Republic of Serbia has already demonstrated its openness to dialogue and will maximize its efforts to overcome the current difficulties in the relations between the Serbian and Albanian peoples. The unreduced presence of UNMIK is of paramount importance for our efforts in order to ensure the effective advice of the Security Council and the United Nations, which play an irreplaceable role in providing legitimacy to the comprehensive solution.

It is evident that, owing to the long-standing problems presented in the report of the Secretary-General, the non-majority population in the province has concerns. The respect for human and minority rights, the protection of the interests, life, cultural and religious heritage of all citizens alike, as well as the full implementation of the European standards in all areas are the goals for which we intend to fight with determination and resolve. We believe, that, by insisting on those values, the Balkans can overcome its past and use its multi-ethnicity as a precious asset, which it is, rather than as a source of conflict. Despite all of those problems, historic progress has undoubtedly been made in the period between the two meetings of the Security Council dealing with Belgrade-Pristina relations. Much more courage is needed to talk peace, much less to begin a war.

Serbia is resolved to commit the past to the past, which we know we cannot change. What we can do though is to shape our present and our future. At this historic moment, we expect the international

community to give an impetus to the implementation of the agreement and the building of regional stability. That is the support that I expect from members of the Security Council and from the Council of the European Union, which is expected to decide on the opening of the European Union membership negotiations.

I would also like to use this opportunity to encourage the authorities in Pristina to find a compromise and a common language in the interests of our people and our common future. Many meetings of the Security Council have been convened to discuss wars, sanctions and bombings in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. It is now time that we convened meetings to discuss the consolidation of peace and the better future of our people.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Thaçi.

Mr. Thaçi (*spoke in Albanian; English text provided by delegation*): It is a special pleasure to address the Council again today and to describe key developments in Kosovo over the past three months, which owing to to their political importance make this period much more special.

At the outset let me express our sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his continuing support for peace and progress in Kosovo and the Balkans.

During the past three months we have had some specific historic developments. The most important event was the signing of the peace agreement and the normalization of relations between the countries of Kosovo and Serbia with EU facilitation. In parallel, the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo have maintained political and economic stability, continued to promote and protect the rights and interests of all communities, improved the socioeconomic situation in the country and significantly advanced our European perspective.

After ten rounds of high-level political dialogue, on 19 April the historic first inter-State agreement was reached between the Republic of Kosovo and Serbia, mediated by European Union (EU) High Representative Baroness Catherine Ashton. That preliminary agreement and the political dialogue had their beginning in discussions in the General Assembly in autumn 2010, and we are proud that we have managed to implement it completely.

The Republic of Kosovo has consistently offered unwavering support and commitment to political dialogue with Serbia and the agreement by taking all measures to ensure its political acceptance in Kosovo and its effective implementation. The Kosovo Parliament voted for it by a two-thirds majority. The citizens of Kosovo have also welcomed the agreement and expressed their hope that it will serve peace, stability and prosperity in Kosovo. Our Kosovo Serb partners in the ruling coalition have also been part of the dialogue process and strongly supported the agreement reached. It has also received broad support from the international community.

I would also like to commend the efforts of my counterpart, Prime Minister Ivica Dačić of Serbia, for his serious efforts and commitment to reaching this important landmark for our two peoples and the countries in the region. In that context, the facilitation of the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia has led to gains for both Serbia and Kosovo; they have gained and the region has gained.

In that respect, the facilitation of the dialogue by EU High Representative Ashton and the agreement reached under her leadership represent a significant achievement for the EU's foreign policy, an important achievement that will serve to stabilize the entire region. The bilateral agreement between Kosovo and Serbia is important beyond the Western Balkans, because it has created an environment for the EU member States that enables the full recognition of the independence of Kosovo.

The agreement contains 15 provisions that regulate key aspects of the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. The agreement is also in line with the Kosovo Constitution. The agreement opens the way for establishing stability in the north through a fundamental transformation of the current security situation and the political and economic conditions. The agreement also opens the way for Kosovo to attain full international recognition and membership in international bodies.

One of the main aspects of the agreement is to establish an association that will perform several functions related to local economic development, education, health, and urban and rural planning. We agreed that the powers of that association will be in accordance with the Constitution of Kosovo, the Law on Local Self-Government and the European Charter of Local Self-Government. The association will be an integral part of Kosovo institutions and as such will

work closely with the central Government in exercising its activities.

Since the beginning of the dialogue, the Republic of Kosovo has been convinced that there can be no normalization of the situation in the north while Serbia operates illegal parallel structures, which it refuses to dismantle. The agreement provides an implementation plan specifying that by mid-July 2013 Serbia will close all of its security premises in Kosovo and cease providing them financial support.

The agreement provides that the Kosovo Police will be the only legal and legitimate police authority in northern Kosovo. A regional police commander will be nominated by the association and selected by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Kosovo. With these provisions, the rule of law will finally be strengthened in the north of Kosovo, and law enforcement authorities will cooperate more effectively.

The agreement confirms the unitary legal system of the Republic of Kosovo as the sole legal authority with jurisdiction in the country. The timely integration of Kosovo-Serb judicial authorities within the legal and judiciary system of Kosovo is essential, and we believe that the composition of the judicial system will increase community trust in Kosovo's courts, improve inter-ethnic relations, and, above all, establish the rule of law in the north that has been absent for the past 14 years.

Another important aspect of the agreement is the organization of municipal elections in the north of Kosovo in October 2013 in parallel with the Kosovo-wide municipal elections. Those elections will be held in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and in accordance with the laws of Kosovo and international standards. The organization of the municipal elections and the formation of new governing structures will strengthen the legitimacy of the institutions of Kosovo at the local level.

Another important provision of the agreement is the mutual agreement that neither party will block, or encourage others to block, progress by the other party on the path to EU integration. That mutual assurance is a promising provision that supports the hope that the European integration path for both countries will be smooth and swift, based on fair conditions and individual merits.

Prior to the agreement, Kosovo and Serbia had signed a number of technical agreements on the freedom of movement of people and goods, on applying integrated border management along the inter-State border, on customs services, and on exchanging liaison offices between capitals as the first step towards establishing diplomatic relations. Those agreements have undoubtedly improved the political, economic and social conditions in Kosovo, Serbia and the broader region.

The implementation of integrated border management between the Republic of Kosovo and Serbia has continued in the recent months. At the same time, the agreement on exchanging liaison offices between Kosovo and Serbia has led to steady progress in finding a joint solution to the issues of representation, mandate, composition, immunities and protection of personnel and communication.

In that context, for the first time, the Republic of Kosovo will be represented in Belgrade at the ambassadorial level by a member of the Kosovo Diplomatic Service. That step marks a historic turning point in official communication between two countries, given the fact that the liaison offices will have a unique role in creating mutual trust beyond the institutional context.

Without detracting from the historic importance of the signing of the agreement, the implementation of that agreement is essential for Serbia, Kosovo and the Serbs in Kosovo. The coming months will be crucial in that regard.

The Kosovo Government, public institutions and political actors of all kinds in the country are committed to implementing the agreement, which will open the way for the integration and normalization of northern Kosovo and for the improvement of relations with Serbia by opening a new chapter of cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding. We affirm our determination to take, as a matter of priority, all technical and political steps needed to ensure the timely and constructive implementation of all aspects of the agreement.

We also expect Serbia to maintain a steady course of progress in fulfilling its obligations and working closely with local Serbs in the north to persuade them to accept and implement the agreement. We count on the support of the member States of the European Union and the wider international community in implementing the agreement in order to attain Kosovo's full international

recognition and membership in the United Nations and other international and regional bodies.

Over the past three months, the Republic of Kosovo has maintained political and economic stability and a safe environment for all its citizens; improved institutional performance; strengthened the rule of law; accelerated efforts and investments to protect communities and their religious freedoms; and has worked to enhance the socioeconomic conditions and social inclusion of various social groups in Kosovo.

In recent months, the stream of international recognition of Kosovo's independence and statehood has continued. In the last few days and weeks, Kosovo has been recognized by Tanzania, Yemen and Guyana. We have also intensified regional participation and membership in various European bodies, such as the European Investment Bank.

The timely and effective implementation of the agreement is essential to establishing security, the rule of law and order in the north of Kosovo, as well as to reducing the criminal activity and economic informality that have been rife in that part of Kosovo under the control of parallel structures for the past 14 years.

The Government of Kosovo has upheld its commitment to protect and promote the rights of communities by providing institutional, political, economic and social support. Kosovo security institutions have increased their efforts to provide additional security to Serbian Orthodox Churches and other heritage sites. In March 2013, the Kosovo Police created a special task force comprising 207 police officers, coming from all communities, who provide 24-hour security for Serb religious and cultural sites. So far, there have been no reports of incidents against the Serbian Orthodox heritage in Kosovo.

Moreover, during this period Kosovo has also maintained economic stability, continued the privatization of publicly owned enterprises and expanded the scope of foreign direct investments. Likewise, the Kosovo Assembly has continued its legislative work and adopted 10 new laws regulating a range of economic, judicial and public administration issues.

Kosovo's path towards European Union integration has shown steady progress. EU integration is a national priority, representing our agenda of modernization and political transformation. As a result of Kosovo's constructive engagement in ongoing dialogue and in fulfilment of European requirements, Kosovo is on track to sign this year a Stabilization and Association Agreement and benefit from visa liberalization.

On 22 April, the European Commission recommended the opening of negotiations for signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Kosovo, which opens the prospects for establishing contractual relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the European Union. In less than two weeks, the European Council will take a decision on approving the negotiations for signing such an Agreement between the EU and Kosovo.

The EU report represents the first and most important political assessment of Kosovo's progress in its path towards EU integration. The report acknowledges that Kosovo has met all four short-term priorities in the area of public administration, the rule of law, minority protection and trade, and recommends to the EU Parliament and Council that negotiations for the signing of a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Kosovo be opened.

Last but not least, following the important developments in recent months and the overall political, economic, social and inter-ethnic progress in Kosovo, it is our firm conviction that it is time for the Council to consider closing the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in the near future, which will contribute to the process under way in Kosovo, create space for local ownership, preserve the credibility of the United Nations and its role in the past in Kosovo, and ultimately reduce unnecessary financial costs, which could be used by United Nations agencies in Kosovo for more important socioeconomic development projects or in other crisis situations.

The agreement between Kosovo and Serbia represents a significant milestone and opportunity for the Council to consider adopting a new resolution to end the UNMIK mandate in Kosovo; show support for the first agreement, mutually agreed upon by Kosovo and Serbia; provide support for the EU to monitor the implementation of the agreement, and show support for the full functioning of both parties as independent neighbours and responsible members of the international community.

Let me conclude by reiterating the unwavering dedication and perseverance of the Kosovo Government

and its people in continuing to make Kosovo successful and prosperous, rejecting the legacy of the past and joining the community of free and peaceful nations at the regional and international levels. The agreement between Kosovo and Serbia represents a crucial and historic moment for improving the relations between Kosovo and Serbia as two independent States with a historic opportunity to pave the way for good-neighbourly relations in the EU integration process. Both sides have had to make some compromises, which are ultimately in the best interests of the citizens of Kosovo and their future within the unitary and functioning State of Kosovo. However, the timely and effective implementation of the agreement will determine the success and normalization of inter-State relations. Good intentions should be translated into visible actions. Members of the Council and the wider international community should support the effective implementation of the agreement.

Mr. Kim Sook (Republic of Korea): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his insightful briefing. I would also like to welcome Prime Minister Ivica Dačić and Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi back to the Council today.

Since the last Council meeting on this issue in March (see S/PV.6939), there have been constructive developments in the political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The Republic of Korea congratulates both sides on reaching the historic agreement of 19 April within the framework of a dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU). The agreement is a major breakthrough in the normalization of relations and also represents a big step forward for regional peace and security. In that regard, we commend both Prime Ministers for demonstrating their political courage and taking a flexible approach to finding compromise. We also applaud the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms. Catherine Ashton, for her tireless efforts and personal dedication in facilitating this ground-breaking agreement.

What is required now is the full and effective implementation of the agreement on the ground. In that vein, it is encouraging that a new round of technical talks on the implementation has already begun in Brussels. However, the path to full implementation could be easily littered with serious obstacles. The biggest challenge at this juncture is the strong resistance and scepticism of ethnic Serbs living in northern Kosovo. Taking into consideration that the 19 April agreement primarily concerns the status of the four municipalities in northern Kosovo, implementation simply cannot work without their cooperation. Therefore, we would like to emphasize that it should be carried out in an inclusive and participatory manner that allows the full participation of Kosovo Serbs. It is also imperative that all police and judicial authorities in northern Kosovo be integrated into Kosovo's institutional framework, as both sides have agreed.

However, genuine sustainable reconciliation cannot be achieved overnight. The old tensions are still far from fading. Lingering mistrust presents huge obstacles to a constructive dialogue. This is all the more reason why the political dialogue must be complemented by confidence-building measures. In our meeting in March, we suggested educational initiatives and an awareness-raising campaign as effective confidence-building measures, and today I am please to note that the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/254) describes some meaningful progress in the educational sector.

We believe that instilling the values of tolerance and inter-ethnic understanding in future generations is the first step towards restoring trust among communities. We therefore call on both sides to further strengthen their efforts to promote intercultural education and to facilitate interchange among students. Furthermore, Kosovo must uphold its commitment to ensuring the full safety of all ethnic minorities. Without it, people will find it difficult to have a sense of safety, trust and confidence in their system.

In that context, a series of incidents targeting the staff of the Mitrovica North Administrative Office and attacks on returnees continue to be of particular concern. We condemn such attacks. We also call on the Kosovo authorities to redouble their efforts to better protect all ethnic minority communities.

Finally, the Republic of Korea would like to commend Special Representative Zarif and the entire team of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We hope that UNMIK will further strengthen its close cooperation with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the Kosovo Force and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, thereby making a substantial contribution to lasting peace and genuine reconciliation in Kosovo.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing. I welcome the presence of the Prime Minister of Serbia, His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, at today's meeting. I have also listened carefully to the statement made by Mr. Thaçi.

China has always held that resolution 1244 (1999) is an important legal basis for resolving the question of Kosovo. Efforts to resolve that issue should be carried out within the framework of that resolution. It is up to the parties to find a mutually acceptable settlement through dialogue and negotiation. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia should be fully respected.

China welcomes the recent rounds of the high-level political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, at which positive results have been achieved. We encourage both parties to continue to move the pragmatic and constructive dialogue forward in an effort to find a long-term solution to the question of Kosovo so as to maintain the peace and stability of the Balkans and Europe at large.

The security situation in Kosovo remains calm, but the northern part of Kosovo remains tense. In that connection, we express our concern. The parties concerned must take action to effectively protect the legitimate rights of the different ethnic groups of Kosovo, to adopt a prudent approach and to adhere to dialogue to resolve their differences. It is important to avoid any actions that might complicate and escalate the current situation.

China commends the work carried out by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We support UNMIK's continued efforts to implement the Council's mandate. We hope that UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force will strengthen their cooperation and coordination and work in synergy so as to play an active and constructive role in facilitating a solution to the Kosovo question.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, and His Excellency Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Prime Minister of Kosovo. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Developments that can be described as historic have taken place since the last debate of the Security Council devoted to UNMIK (see S/PV.6939). On 19 April, after the tenth round of talks, a first tentative agreement governing the normalization of relations was reached in the high-level political commitment under the auspices of the European Union. This agreement is a milestone for reconciliation between the two countries, which share a painful past marked by the atrocities of war. Like leaders of other countries in the region before them, the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo were able to act based primarily on the firm commitment of their people to rejoining the European family.

Luxembourg can only welcome the political vision and leadership shown by the Prime Ministers of Serbia and Kosovo. As a member of the European Union, Luxembourg also welcomes the role played by the Union, in particular the personal commitment and considerable efforts of its High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms. Catherine Ashton, who has been able to facilitate and lead sensitive and difficult negotiations.

By adopting at the end of May the plan to implement the provisions of the historic agreement of 19 April, the Serbian and Kosovo Governments confirmed their desire to normalize their relations in order to realize their European perspective. Negotiations are now under way in Brussels on the practical details of the implementation. Luxembourg encourages both parties to continue to uphold the spirit of compromise in order to achieve tangible and visible results in the implementation of the April 19 agreement, even before the European Council meets on 27 and 28 June in Brussels.

My country is ready to continue to support the efforts of the two countries and their leaders to achieve their common goal. Luxembourg remains strongly committed to the stability, the development of the rule of law and socio-economic development of Kosovo, through its participation in KFOR and EULEX and through a substantial bilateral cooperation programme.

In his report, the Secretary-General reported on a situation that has remained generally calm, but with transient tensions in multi-ethnic areas as well as in northern Mitrovica. The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the Kosovo Force

have responded, in close collaboration with the Kosovo police, by increasing the visibility of their regular patrols and strengthening other preventive measures in the sector.

We also commend the efforts of the Kosovo authorities to establish, in cooperation with EULEX, a multi-ethnic police unit that is responsible for the protection of religious and historical sites. The unit will play a key role in preventing a repeat of the vandalism, in January, of Serbian Orthodox sites role.

To conclude, let me reiterate the profound conviction of Luxembourg to see the future of Kosovo, and that of Serbia, form part of a decidedly European perspective. A long road toward peace and stability has been achieved since UNMIK was established in 1999. It must therefore continue.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing and Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minster of Serbia, and Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Prime Minister of Kosovo, for their statements.

The Security Council is meeting for the first time since the historic agreement of 19 April was achieved between Serbia and Kosovo under the auspices of the European Union. The agreement lays the bases for normalized relations that will contribute to regional stability and enable the people to turn towards their future, the development of their countries and their European prospects. We commend the Serb and Kosovo authorities, particularly the two Prime Ministers, who have been personally committed to that difficult exercise, for their determination and courage. Their statements before the Council today represent a new demonstration of their spirit of cooperation. We call upon them to ensure the swift implementation of the agreement, pursuant to the road map of 22 May.

Serbia must steadily dismantle the parallel sovereign structures that it maintains in the north, pursuant to its commitment. For its part, Kosovo must provide the future community of majority-Serb areas with substantive autonomy, as provided for in the 19 April agreement, in order to reassure the northern Serbian population and allow it to find its lasting place in Kosovo.

Generally speaking, it is clearly important to ensure that the rights of the various communities throughout the territory, especially concerning their cultural and religious heritage, are protected. The two parties must work to successfully achieve the municipal elections scheduled in the autumn, in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The previously concluded agreements must also be fully implemented.

If the conclusions reached by the European Council at its December 2012 meeting are met, by the end of June new milestones on the two countries' paths to Europe — including the launching of negotiations with Serbia on accession to the European Union and a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo — could be reached.

The international community must acknowledge those positive developments and cast off the paradigms of a bygone era. Kosovo has now been recognized by the majority of the States Members of the Organization, reflecting the reality of a State that aspires to good relations with its neighbours and peaceful integration within its region and to find its proper place in the international community.

As the European Union, NATO and the OSCE adjust their presence on the ground, we encourage the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to do the same with a view to promoting peaceful conduct, in cooperation with the Kosovo authorities, while avoiding the undue influence of those who champion the status quo. In that context, I wish to thank the Special Representative and the UNMIK actors for their efforts.

It is also essential that the Kosovo authorities actively cooperate with the Special Representative of the European Union, Mr. Žbogar, and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), as they carry out crucial work to implement the dialogue agreements between Belgrade and Pristina and combat corruption, organized crime and impunity for the most heinous crimes, including alleged trafficking in organs. All parties must respect the freedom of movement of troops and personnel deployed under the Kosovo Force and EULEX.

France remains committed to the reality of a sovereign, peaceful, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo living in peace with its neighbours. It believes that Serbia must become one of the pillars of stability in the Balkans. Today, we have inched a bit closer to those two goals.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): Let me start by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We also welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Prime Minister of Serbia, His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, and thank him and Mr. Thaçi for their statements.

The position of Azerbaijan with regard to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia and the non-recognition of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence remains unchanged. Resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be the binding international legal basis for a comprehensive settlement to the political process and negotiations.

Azerbaijan welcomes the progress made at the meeting of the parties on 19 April in Brussels, facilitated by the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, where they reached a landmark agreement on the principles governing the normalization of relations. We encourage both sides to remain further committed to reaching agreement on the contentious issues through mutually acceptable solutions. That is indispensable to the security, stability and well-being of the region.

UNMIK's activities are of great importance.

The Mission's ongoing collaboraton with all other stakeholders to enhance the prospects of success in the political dialogue is noteworthy. UNMIK should continue to play its key role in ensuring the coordination of all international efforts on its status-neutral framework, as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999).

The general calm that was observed in the overall security situation during the reporting period is a welcome development. However, repeated incidents of violence in northern Mitrovica constituted exceptions to the general security environment. It is necessary that these incidents be duly investigated.

The voluntary return of internally displaced persons to Kosovo again showed few signs of improvement during the reporting period. We commend the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in monitoring the process and implementing the necessary policies towards facilitation of their return. We agree with the Secretary-General that the promotion of reconciliation and increased trust among the communities in Kosovo is as important as the achievement of success in the political process. Therefore, it should be underlined once again that the preservation of the region's rich cultural diversity and spiritual heritage on the basis of ethnic and religious tolerance is indispensable.

In conclusion, I would like to commend UNMIK, under the leadership of Mr. Zarif, for its efforts and important role in maintaining peace and stability in Kosovo and the entire region.

Mr. Manzi (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing. I welcome Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia and Mr. Hashim Thaçi of Kosovo. We welcome their presence here today and their statements.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) highlights the challenges to its long-term presence and security in Kosovo, but the report also highlights the agreement between Belgrade and Pristina. Rwanda welcomes this historic agreement governing the normalization of relations, reached in the framework facilitated by the European Union. Serbia and Kosovo have proved that they can both focus on the future rather than stay entangled in the past.

Indeed, Rwanda believes that it is in the common interest of both countries to close that dark chapter of their history and continue with serious negotiations. I deeply appreciate the role of the European Union, especially its continued efforts to maintain the momentum of peaceful dialogue between the two countries. It is evident to us in the active, skilful and sustainable involvement of the High Representative of the European Union, who has stewarded that sensitive and delicate negotiation towards a landmark agreement. Rwanda strongly believes that it is through dialogue that the long-term normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina can meaningfully flourish. The step taken by the parties is a cornerstone in their history, and there should be no turning back. We therefore call on both sides to maintain open channels of communication and involve all stakeholders as the process moves towards full realization.

This important step on the part of both leaders indicates that they are looking forward to a better

future for their countries. We call on the international community to give full support to the parties on their journey to implement this agreement. The Council responding with one voice in support of this agreement would be a key contribution to the realization and implementation of the agreement, but of course both parties should continue to demonstrate their political while and sincere desire in the continuation of the dialogue that will bring lasting peace.

On the security situation, my delegation is concerned about the tensions in Kosovo. We call upon leaders, in collaboration with the international presence, to engage opinion leaders in the concerned communities in finding a peaceful solution to the cause of this tension. We welcome the ongoing cooperation on cultural heritage projects. Despite recent violence caused by the acts of a few extremists, Rwanda remains optimistic that Kosovo and Serbia can eventually resolve their differences.

I commend the collaboration between UNMIK and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) in the area of the rule of law and its technical cooperation with the Ministries of Justice and Internal Affairs. In particular, we commend the efforts undertaken by EULEX in monitoring and advising the rule of law sector.

Regarding human rights, Rwanda stresses that it is crucial to protect the human rights of minorities. The protection of their religious values as cultural heritage is crucial for the stability of Kosovo and the region. Rwanda welcomes the establishment of a specialized unit for the protection of cultural heritage and religious sites.

My delegation welcomes the drafting of the Kosovo Strategy and Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

I welcome the cooperation between UNMIK and other international organizations in implementing the United Nations mandate. We urge the international community to maintain its commitment to increasing its assistance to the parties in order to achieve lasting peace. However, we remain convinced that the task of building a stable and prosperous Kosovo and Serbia is the primary responsibility of both countries themselves. We therefore call upon the two countries to strengthen their cooperation with UNMIK.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to stress that the achievement of peace in Kosovo lies in the hands of both parties, Kosovo and Serbia, themselves. My delegation therefore urges both sides to continue in the same spirit of determination and compromise in the implementation and realization of the historical agreement.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): The United States warmly welcomes both Prime Minister Dačić and Prime Minister Thaçi back to the Council and congratulates them on reaching the landmark 19 April agreement on principles for the normalization of relations. We commend the European Union, especially High Representative Ashton, for their continued engagement and leadership on this important issue.

The historic 19 April agreement strengthens Kosovo and Serbia's futures as multi-ethnic democracies based on the rule of law and respect for human rights and as neighbours on the path towards European integration. The United States applauds both Governments for their political courage and commitment to making the hard decisions to achieve this significant milestone, which holds the potential to significantly enhance stability in the region. We welcome the Prime Minister's agreement on an associated implementation plan and time line, and look forward to the agreement's timely and full implementation.

It will be important for both Governments to cooperate with the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the Kosovo Force and other partners to advance implementation and ensure safety and security during the transition phase. We encourage the legislatures of Serbia and Kosovo to take all necessary steps in support of this agreement.

The agreement provides a durable solution for northern Kosovo within Kosovo's legal and institutional framework, and reaffirms far-reaching municipal self-governance for ethnic Serbs and other communities living in the north. Free, fair and orderly municipal elections this fall will be an essential step on this path, and we commend the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for its work with the Government of Kosovo to facilitate this electoral process.

At the same time, however, we are concerned about the threats of violence and irresponsible rhetoric from hardliners who are personally vested in maintaining the status quo. We encourage both Governments to explain the agreement and its benefits to their citizens.

We hope that the residents of northern Kosovo will take note of Prime Minister Dačić's appeal to accept and support the agreement, and we welcome the assurances of President Jahjaga and Prime Minister Thaçi that all citizens' rights will be protected. We applaud the remarkable progress Kosovo has achieved, including in reforming its justice sector and economy.

The new criminal code, the new code of criminal procedure and the restructuring of the courts are major steps forward. Kosovo's standby arrangement with the International Monetary Fund is meeting performance benchmarks, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development just approved its country strategy for Kosovo.

We are also pleased to note that over half of all States Members of the United Nations now recognize Kosovo.

The United States stands with Kosovo as a partner and friend and looks forward to deepening our partnership in the years to come. Serbia is also a long-time partner of the United States, and we welcome Prime Minister Dačić's productive trade mission to the United States in May.

By resolving political differences through dialogue and compromise, Kosovo and Serbia have collectively set a noteworthy and constructive example for the region. We look forward to continued progress by both countries and their societies on reforms and boosting economic growth.

Lastly, let me take this opportunity to reiterate our strong support for the commendable efforts of Kosovo and Serbia to further their cooperation which remains the optimal path to peace and prosperity.

Ms. King (Australia): Allow me to express Australia's appreciation to Special Representative Zarif for his presentation this morning and for his continuing efforts and those of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo and in the region. I also welcome Prime Minister Thaçi and Prime Minister Dačić and thank them for their statements.

We welcome the first agreement between Serbia and Kosovo of principles governing the normalization of relations, initialled on 19 April and subsequently approved in full by the Government of Serbia and the Parliament of Kosovo on 22 April. We join others in congratulating both parties for the strong political leadership and far-sighted vision they have displayed in reaching that historic milestone, which, among other important components, also allows both countries to make progress towards their European integration. I would also like to acknowledge the constructive and dynamic role played by High Representative Ashton over a period of four critical months to steer difficult negotiations to their successful outcome. It is necessary that both parties now implement the 15 points of the Agreement fully and in line with the agreed timelines.

A viable solution to the situation in Kosovo cannot be achieved without addressing the anxieties expressed by Serbs residing in northern Kosovo. Continuing political dialogue between Belgrade, Pristina and Serbs in northern Kosovo can ensure that the implementation process meets their concerns and interests. Local elections in municipalities in northern Kosovo later this year facilitated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe will be an important test of the degree to which Serbs residing in northern Kosovo feel a real sense of political inclusion. Ensuring that northern Kosovo's security structures become part of a coherent framework within Kosovo will also be a crucial step towards a long-term resolution of the situation.

Security, the rule of law and a strong human rights framework are essential components of any long-term sustainable solution to the situation in Kosovo. Australia is encouraged by the fact that the overall security situation on the ground remained relatively calm throughout the period covered by the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/254), but we regret the incidents which occurred in ethnically mixed areas in northern Kosovo. The attacks on offices of political parties and civil society groups are of particular concern and represent a threat to dialogue and mediation efforts. We commend the close cooperation between the Kosovo police, the European Union Rule of Law Mission and the Kosovo Force in responding to those challenges.

We welcome the steps taken by the Assembly of Kosovo to strengthen the rule of law and stem corruption. The work of the Kosovo police to fight organized crime and international narcotics flows is vital. That contributes to strengthening law and order not only in Kosovo but in the broader region.

Australia condemns acts of vandalism and the desecration of sites of cultural or religious significance. In that regard, we commend the establishment of

a specialized unit within the Kosovo police for the protection of cultural heritage and religious sites. We acknowledge the continuing efforts made to strengthen protection frameworks in Kosovo for religious, social and ethnic minorities. Australia continues to encourage the safe and viable return of internally displaced persons.

Much progress has been achieved over the past four months, and we welcome the efforts of the parties in working towards a stable and prosperous Kosovo. The international community needs to remain closely engaged to encourage and monitor the faithful implementation of the agreements reached at the political level and continue to support the ongoing political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina and with local communities towards a better future for all people in Serbia and Kosovo.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): I thank Special Representative Farid Zarif for his important briefing. We thank Prime Minister Ivica Dačić and Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi for their compelling statements.

We welcome the peace and normalization agreement signed by Serbia and Kosovo on 19 April this year. The agreement is indeed a landmark. The two Prime Ministers have underlined that this is a historic moment for the two countries to improve relations and forge good-neighbourly ties. Leaders on both sides have shown courage and foresight to reach out, explore common ground and make the necessary compromises. They have succeeded against heavy odds. We congratulate them and the people of the two countries for their achievement. It should signal a new dawn in the region.

We appreciate High Representative Catherine Ashton for her skilful mediation which made the Agreement possible. We salute the European Union for its steadfast commitment to peace in the Balkans.

The signing of the agreement increases the prospects of reconciliation between Belgrade and Pristina and promotes peace in the region. It has a built-in potential to save future generations of Serbs and Kosovars from the scourge of strife. It is an opportunity for the region to transcend the narrative and the reality of ethnic cleansings.

The ratifications of the agreement by the Parliaments of Serbia and Kosovo demonstrate the collective desire of the people on both sides to resolve outstanding issues and move towards a common European future. We laud the undertaking that neither side will block each others' path towards integration with the European Union. The implementation of the agreement is as important as its signing. We urge both sides to conclude arrangements for implementing the agreement. They should not be deterred by those who seek to obstruct the path of peace.

It is important for the leaders to build support for the agreement among their communities and constituencies. The holding of elections in northern Kosovo in October 2013 and the integration of Serbs into the national mainstream are important benchmarks. Ethnic divisions and barriers must blur over time.

We are glad to learn that the situation in Kosovo is generally calm. That opportunity should be used to let peace and stability grow, but we should also heed the warnings by Special Representative Zarif and Prime Minister Dačić that stability in Kosovo is fragile.

In the implementation phase, therefore, close coordination between NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) will be extremely important. UNMIK, under the effective leadership of Special Representative Zarif, has an especially key role to play. We hope that the leadership of both countries will continue to find solutions to all outstanding problems and move their people away from the legacy of conflict to cooperation. Rapprochement should lead to new bonds between the two neighbours. The Agreement also gives fresh ground to the Council to bridge differences on Kosovo.

Pakistan recognized Kosovo's statehood last year. We sincerely hope that the people of Kosovo will grow and prosper in a stable environment as they rebuild their nation into a unitary and functional State. Pakistan wishes both States well. This is a historic moment. It must be captured by all, but primarily by Serbia and Kosovo.

Mr. Churkin (Russia) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Mr. Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-Genral, for presenting the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/254) on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We welcome the participation in this meeting of the Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Dačić. We share his assessment.

We have listened carefully to Mr. Dačić. We expect that the results achieved during the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina conducted under European Union mediation will lead to a genuine improvement in the situation of the Serb population of Kosovo. We back Serbia's efforts in this very complex process. The demands for guarantees of a normal life in the province are fully justified. The dialogue addresses only a few aspects of the normalization of relations between Serbia and the province and has no bearing on the issue of the status of Kosovo, which remains open.

The only legal basis for a settlement of this issue continues to be resolution 1244 (1999). The Council remains the only body with the authority to take the relevant decisions. The international community and, first and foremost, the United Nations should not diminish the attention paid to events in Kosovo. Belgrade and Pristina's agreement has not removed the main problems in the province. Furthermore, the most difficult phase remains — the practical implementation of the agreement. We believe that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo must actively involve itself in the process. What must not be lost from sight are all the other aspects of the mandate granted to UNMIK under resolution 1244 (1999), which must be fully implemented. The United Nations presence has a significant potential for resolving issues that exist in such fields as the rule of law, the protection of minorities, the forging of intercommunal dialogue and, of course, the protection of Orthodox sites. For this reason, we are against a reduction in UNMIK's mandate; faced with so many problems, there is a need to expand the political component of the Mission.

The situation in the province, especially in the north, remains tense. That is demonstrated in the Secretary-General's report, with a growing number of cases of grenade explosions in areas of mixed populations in the north and the increase in ethnically motivated incidents in the west of Kosovo. Also of note is the letter circulated in the Security Council by the Head of Serb Department on Kosovo and Metohija regarding the low level of return of internally displaced persons in Kosovo. Regrettably, the numerous cases of Kosovo Serbs' property being put up for sale and their forced displacement outside the province continue to receive little attention. All of this bears witness to serious problems in the field of inter-ethnic tolerance. The size of major Serb enclaves is gradually decreasing. Smaller ones are essentially dying out.

The tensions relating to Orthodox churches and cemeteries can be seen in the fact that at the beginning of the year there was a wave of vandalism. There was also an unacceptable situation around the World Heritage site of the Visoki Dečani Serbian Orthodox Monastery. The disdain shown by the local authorities for laws passed to uphold the rights of national minorities and the preservation of Serbian cultural heritage is clear. Messages addressed to Pristina regarding the unacceptability of all this have shown themselves to be inadequate to restore genuine order in the province. Lengthy and persistent efforts will be needed by the international community. Of concern here are the European Union and NATO plans to reduce the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) and Kosovo Force missions active in the province on the basis of United Nations Security Council decisions.

We are concerned by the complete lack of information regarding the course of investigations by EULEX into the allegations by the Council of Europe's Special Rapporteur, Mr. Marty, regarding the illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo. Prosecutor Williamson's Special Investigative Task Force was set up in January 2011. Since the beginning of last year, it has been fully staffed and should work to produce real results.

The stabilization of Kosovo lies far ahead. Problems in the province, both current and long-term, can only be resolved by strictly political means. We expect that all international presences will unswervingly follow the provisions of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Kpayedo (Togo) (*spoke in French*): I should like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the quarterly report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). I should also like to thank the representatives of Serbia and Kosovo for their important statements.

The agreement signed on 19 April between Kosovo and Serbia constitutes a decisive historic step on the path to the normalization of their relations. Fourteen years after the end of the conflict and five years after independence proclaimed by Kosovo, the parties, after months of tough negotiations, have finally initialled this agreement in order to put an end to the conflict in Kosovo and open up new prospects for both States. The agreement signed grants a large measure of autonomy

to the Serbian municipalities in North Kosovo and gives the Kosovo Government powers over all its territory, which constitutes a considerable step forward towards a consensus-based definition of the final status of Kosovo.

My country commends the political courage shown by the two parties in overcoming the resentment and the hostility of some of their people, who feared that the agreement might sacrifice their interests in the interest of a reasonable compromise. We urge parties to rapidly the implement committee called for by the "First agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations" so as to bring about its effective implementation. We believe that the first task of the Committee must be to propose judicial reforms in order to align legislation with the 15 points of the agreement.

Togo also urges both parties to pursue dialogue on the questions remaining in abeyance, particularly the issues regarding those persons who have disappeared or who are displaced, property ownership and the integration of the Kosovo Serbs into central institutions. Moreover, we welcome the progress achieved in other areas of dialogue, particularly the exchange of liaison officers, which should, as emphasized in the Secretary-General's report, foster communication between the two parties and the provisional agreement on customs and taxation questions.

There is a risk that the normalization under way in relations between Serbia and Kosovo might not achieve its purpose if the peoples who are principally concerned, particularly the Serbians in North Kosovo, are not involved in the new dynamic. The many demonstrations that the community organized before and after the signing of the agreement to voice its hostility to any connection with Kosovo and the demands put forward by the representatives demanding the convening in Serbia of a referendum on the Brussels agreement are a major source of concern. That is why Togo urges Serbia and Kosovo to take the necessary steps to explain the basis of the agreement and the comparative advantages that it affords to the various communities.

We encourage the Serbs in northern Kosovo who believe that their concerns have not been sufficiently taken into account to fully join in the process of normalization and to play a part in the local elections to be held in neighbouring municipalities. By doing that, they will be able to form the association of municipalities, which will be in charge of the administration of their municipal constituencies, pursuant to the 19 April agreement.

My country wishes to welcome the fact that the security situation has remained stable in Kosovo during the period under consideration, despite tension observed in the mixed zones in the north of Kosovo. We also are concerned by the incidents involving the use of firearms and explosives affecting both civilians and personnel of the Kosovo security forces. We urge the Kosovo police to continue their efforts to investigate the most recent events affecting minority communities, the defacing of property, acts of vandalism against religious sites, the desecration of graves and other acts of intolerance.

I would like to conclude by again expressing my country's congratulations to the European Union, in particular the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Baroness Catherine Ashton, whose decisive role made it possible for the 19 April agreement to be signed. We also wish to thank UNMIK, the Kosovo Force, the European Union Rule of Law Mission, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and all partner organizations standing with the Kosovo authorities in the stabilization of the territory and the construction of democratic institutions.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I convey my gratitude to Mr. Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for having presented the quarterly report that takes stock of developments in the situation of Kosovo. During the period under consideration, the Serb and Kosovo sides have shown political will in the spirit of compromise, as is clearly demonstrated by the new cycle of dialogue since the beginning of the year under the auspices of Baroness Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić and Mr. Hashim Thaçi have confirmed their commitment and resolve this morning before the Security Council, and we commend them.

The dialogue has promoted significant progress in the association/community project in Serb municipalities in Kosovo, ultimately leading to the approval by the parties on 19 April of the "first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations". The agreement is historic in many ways. It marks a turning point in relations between Serbia

and Kosovo, and has finally opened a real prospect for their integration into the European Union. It is in the interest of both parties and the entire region that these agreements be fully implemented.

The parties have also made progress on issues as crucial as the levying of customs duties, taxes and value added tax in northern Kosovo, the issue of land records and the integrated management of border crossings. It is hoped that this process can lead to definitive agreements and extend to the crucial issue of the movement of people in order to help allay the fears and apprehensions of the people concerned. In this process, the parties have shown courage and resolve not to dwell on the past but to look to the future together. The European Union, for its part, has also demonstrated its ability to contribute through perseverance, persuasion and motivation to a breakthrough in relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

In terms of security, the situation has remained generally calm. However, the tension persists in the northern part of Kosovo because of incidents affecting minorities, such as theft of and damage to property, and the illegal occupation and burning of houses. The issue of the protection of heritage and religious sites continues to arise, and requires tangible action. The decision to set up a specialized Kosovo police unit for the protection of cultural heritage and religious sites is a measure which we welcome.

With regard to the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, we welcome the appointment of Mr. Bernd Borchardt to lead it. That structure must continue its monitoring, mentoring and advising activities in the field of rule of law and the promotion of cooperation with the parties to fight crime at the regional level.

We commend the parties for the progress made. We encourage them to consolidate the momentum by continuing to work with an open mind and conciliation to address the outstanding issues by intensifying their efforts and preparing a common future for present and future generations. We also congratulate the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force, which continue to play a key role in advancing the dialogue and negotiation between the parties to find a political solution that is comprehensive and inclusive, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Oyarzábal (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should first like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and to welcome the Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, and Mr. Hashim Thaçi.

I underscore the role of the United Nations in Kosovo via UNMIK in promoting security, stability and respect for human rights, as well as its cooperation with the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), maintaining a status-neutral position regarding the statute and under the auspices of the United Nations. We welcome the signing of the "First agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations" in the context of the high-level dialogue under European Union auspices. We trust that the agreement will give a high profile to the situation and that progress will be made on a political solution to the outstanding issues through compromise, trust and dialogue. Those in Serbia who favour the normalization of relations deserve special recognition. We urge the parties to pursue this agenda, pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999), and to implement the agreement strictly, overcoming past obstacles and acting in good faith and peacefully.

We must continue to focus on the security situation in northern Mitrovica. This will require coordinated action to ensure that the problems can be resolved in good faith and future tension avoided. UNMIK's important work makes it imperative to find practical solutions, prevent tension and ensure that the Administration continues to play its role in conflict prevention, mediation and facilitation.

We are concerned over the ongoing incidents and tensions, particularly the destruction of religious and cultural heritage, the prevention of which is an UNMIK priority. We draw special attention to the desecration of Orthodox Serbian cemeteries in Kosovo. Argentina condemns such acts and calls for the conclusion of investigations under way in order to punish the perpetrators of these acts of vandalism and religious intolerance, and to promote reconciliation between the communities.

We must continue to work to ensure the return and final integration of internally displaced persons and in particular facilitate their access to housing, basic services and jobs. We must also expedite the

documentation of their civil status and prevent incidents of insecurity. UNMIK technical assistance is essential in that regard. We support UNMIK as it supports the rule of law, particularly by cooperating with EULEX and the competent authorities in Serbia and Pristina.

In conclusion, I underscore the work of the Special Representative to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo, pursuant to resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2013/254) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). My thanks also go to his Special Representative for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for introducing the report and for his sustained personal endeavours to promote the reconciliation of the Kosovo communities. We are also grateful for the words that we have heard from the high authorities with us today.

As others have done, we welcome the "First agreement of principles governing the normalization of relations" reached on 19 April within the framework of the dialogue facilitated by the European Union. This represents a historic step forward with the potential to achieve regional reconciliation, stability and prosperity. The most challenging part now is to ensure that the results of the dialogue are implemented and their positive impact on the ground.

We believe that UNMIK has a key role to play during this implementation phase. We support the assertions in the report that UNMIK, in supporting the positive achievements reached through dialogue, will henceforth focus its efforts on promoting reconciliation among the Kosovo communities.

The escalation of tensions and violence in northern Kosovo remains a cause for concern to my delegation. We note that the alarming trend of incidents involving explosive devices continues. Likewise, security incidents continue to affect returnee areas. We appreciate that the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), the Kosovo Force and local authorities have increased the visibility of their regular patrols and stepped up other preventative measures to the north of Mitrovica.

We also deplore the desecration of cemeteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church that took place during the reporting period. It is imperative that all of those incidents be fully investigated. In that regard, reform of the security and justice sectors must be undertaken, in particular with regard to the administrative and procedural problems that lead to delays in the processing of cases.

The situation facing minority communities in Kosovo still has not shown sufficient improvement, with a climate of tension and discrimination prevailing. We regret that the first quarter of 2013 saw the decrease in voluntary returns continue from the last quarter of 2012.

Turning to the work of the Special Investigative Task Force charged with looking into the reports of inhumane trafficking in persons and human organs, we note with interest the information included in the EULEX report annex and will follow developments in that regard closely. We support the operational cooperation objectives and therefore continue to support the reaching of an arrangement that would allow the United Nations to be involved in the investigation of these reports, all the more in the light of the report's affirmation that this is a complex investigation that will take time to complete and because it covers several jurisdictions and acts that would have been committed some 13 or 14 years ago.

This debate has confirmed that the United Nations continues to play an irreplaceable role as guarantor of stability and neutrality in Kosovo and the region and as a presence conducive to reconciliation among the different communities that coexist in that geographical space. A strong United Nations presence with sufficient resources remains necessary. We reaffirm the relevance of resolution 1244 (1999) as the applicable legal framework in Kosovo, as well as the importance of ensuring full respect for international law.

In conclusion, we draw some hope from the progress observed recently, which nevertheless does not yet imply any change in the position of my Government on the non-recognition of the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United Kingdom.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing today. I am delighted to welcome to the Council His Excellency Mr. Hashim Thaçi, Prime Minister of Kosovo, and His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, Prime Minister of Serbia.

The normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is integral to both countries' European Union (EU) accession paths. We welcome the EU-facilitated dialogue, the success of which must be attributed to the hard work of Cathy Ashton and the two Prime Ministers here today.

From the perspective of sitting in the Security Council, we are all too often able to observe how issues remain blocked because of the absence of vision and commitment on the part of political leaders. The progress that has been made in the EU-facilitated dialogue is a welcome reminder that the opposite can also be the case — that vision, commitment and persistence can yield tangible and effective results, and that flexibility from one side can generate flexibility on the other side. I offer my sincere congratulations to Prime Minister Thaçi and Prime Minister Dačić for the leadership and courage they have demonstrated in coming to an historic agreement that will aid the irrevocable progress of both countries towards the European Union.

The momentum of the past two months must be sustained. Implementation is crucial to unlocking progress for both Kosovo and Serbia. Belgrade must communicate the benefits of this agreement effectively to the local communities in northern Kosovo, and Pristina must demonstrate its support of the rights and culture of all its citizens and integrate Kosovo Serbs in the north.

The continued assistance of the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the implementation of dialogue agreements will be indispensable. The OSCE will play a crucial role in facilitating municipal elections in the north. KFOR will help with maintaining security and stability, and EULEX will help integrate institutions in the north under Kosovo's jurisdiction. The United Kingdom urges the authorities in Pristina and Belgrade to cooperate fully with EULEX and ensure freedom of movement for all of its personnel in the north.

I welcome Kosovo's commitment to holding free, fair and democratic elections. All citizens of Kosovo must have the opportunity to take part in the elections, and women must have an equitable role in competing for political office. The United Kingdom is keen to see the necessary reforms adopted without further delays.

The European Commission report of 22 April states that Kosovo has met the short-term conditionality set out at the December General Affairs Council for opening negotiations on a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union. The United Kingdom fully supports a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo.

Finally, I welcome the further progress made by Kosovo in securing wider international recognition. In recent weeks, the Governments of Guyana, Tanzania and Yemen have all decided to recognize Kosovo's independence. After only five years of independence, Kosovo is now recognized by over half of the States Members of the United Nations. Kosovo's independence is a reality, it is irreversible, and we welcome the steadily growing international recognition of that fact.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at noon.